

Written by Mike Honda
Tuesday, 12 March 2013 00:00

WASHINGTON DC – Today, in response to President Obama's challenge to out-innovate and out-educate our global competitors through a strong emphasis on programs that promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics in our public schools, Rep Michael Honda (CA-17) is re-introducing the Stepping Up to STEM and the Elementary Educator STEM Content Coach Act. (Bill explanations and outside endorsements are below.)

Additionally, in recognition of Rep Honda's STEM leadership in Silicon Valley, **Rep Honda is receiving the George E. Brown, Jr. Leadership Award today from The Science-Engineering-Technology Working Group.**

Past recipients include Speaker Pelosi and Chairmen Sherry Boehlert, Alan Mollohan, Frank Wolf, Bart Gordon, David Obey, Vern Ehlers and Congressman Rush Holt. The award is given to individuals who have shown active leadership in the determination of Science, Engineering, and Technology policy; strong public advocacy in support of a role for the federal government in research; and taken specific actions to advance SET public policy.

"For our nation to remain a leader in scientific advancement and technological innovation," said Rep Honda, "we must equip and train young women and men who will become the scientists and engineers of tomorrow. These bills provide the system supports necessary to build infrastructure, talent pools and teacher support systems that capitalize on, and are the catalyst for, American innovation."

Congressman Honda applauds the collaborative and innovative spirit of Silicon Valley. Through systematic and strategic policy implementation, these bills provide school systems throughout our nation with the necessary tools and resources to teach students the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the STEM fields. These efforts will drive the economy, increase our nation's tax base and provide American employers with home grown talent.

The Stepping Up to STEM bill is the latest iteration of Rep Honda's STEM efforts. Introduced in previous Congresses as the Enhancing STEM Act, the Elevating STEM Act and the Education Innovation Act, this bill continues the steady drumbeat of the STEM priority impacting our classrooms and workplaces. The STEM agenda is important to the President. In the 110th Congress, then Senator Obama and Congressman Honda introduced identical STEM bills, The Enhancing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education Act of 2008.

Specifically, the Stepping Up to STEM bill:

- Establishes an Office of STEM Education within the Department of Education for the purpose of promoting excellence in education to help ensure American competitiveness in the workplace;
- Develops State STEM Network or Consortia in order to strengthen collaboration between

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private and public partnerships and capitalize on the efforts of the implementation of College and Career Ready Standards; and

- Creates an Advanced Research Projects Agency for Education (ARPA-Ed) which will continue to provide grant funding to outside entities to develop educational technology innovations, including data analytic tools that will help school districts with reporting required under federal accountability mandates.

The Elementary Educator STEM Content Coach Act:

- Provides in-house school experts showcasing the integration of STEM disciplines across the curriculum;
- Gives relevant and rich professional development within their school site and district;
- Works in a collaborative fashion and build up STEM skills and competencies of the entire teaching staff; and
- Emphasizes a school district's commitment to the STEM arena; a child's classroom experience must be more than just a test factory.

Endorsements

Intel Corporation: Shelly Esque, vice president of legal and corporate affairs and president of the Intel Foundation

"Today, young people need to understand technology and science simply to live in this increasingly complex and rapidly changing world. And at Intel, we want to fill the talent pipeline with highly skilled, highly technical U.S. workers. Rep. Honda has demonstrated his commitment to STEM education in this country time and time again. We applaud his leadership and the introduction of the Stepping Up to Stem Education Act and Elementary Educator STEM Content Coach Act. We will continue to do our part to support the innovators of tomorrow through community collaboration, Intel education programs and science competitions, such as the Intel Science Talent Search, which concluded last night with an inspirational awards ceremony in Washington, DC."

Synopsys: Director of Corporate Affairs Erin Lynn Brennock

"Synopsys' investments in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math stem from our belief in education as the great equalizer and the great enabler. We applaud this legislation to further such investments."

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics: Executive Director Kichoon Yang

"As a representative of the M in STEM, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics appreciates the importance of investments in STEM education that support all the STEM fields and the young people who want to pursue careers in them. An Office for STEM Education within the Department of Education would provide a means to coordinate that agency's efforts to improve STEM education in elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as in postsecondary institutions. Math teachers and mathematics teacher educators welcome this focus and the higher policy profile STEM education would have at an important agency under this proposal."

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STEM Education Coalition: Executive Director James F. Brown

"There is widespread agreement that strong STEM skills are a central element of a well-rounded education and that STEM education is closely linked with our nation's future economic prosperity. Our Coalition is a strong proponent of comprehensive efforts to coordinate, evaluate, and improve federal STEM programs to ensure that effective programs are scaled up and that underperforming programs are improved or eliminated – and the Stepping Up to STEM Act would be a good step in that direction."

"Our Coalition has advocated for many years that supporting effective STEM educator professional development, preparation, and recruitment should be a top national priority, including targeted efforts to promote STEM subject teacher specialists. This bill is a novel effort to try to build a better network of support for STEM educators and address some of the unique challenges they are facing in trying to keep up with rapid changes in technology and the advancement of science."

National Science Teacher Association: Executive Director David L. Evans

"The National Science Teachers Association is pleased to support the Stepping Up to Stem Education Act. This legislation will strengthen science and STEM education at the national level by creating a STEM education division at the U.S. Department of Education to coordinate Federal STEM efforts and work with STEM stakeholders to ensure our nation's future workforce is being developed. The bill will also empower states to create networks of STEM stakeholders which can work to leverage public and private efforts and bring more quality STEM initiatives to our schools."

"The Elementary Educator STEM Content Coach Act recognizes that the K-12 STEM pipeline begins with the teacher in elementary science and mathematics. Research tells us that teachers in the elementary grades do not have strong content preparation in science and mathematics. The legislation will allow schools to develop elementary school leaders (coaches) with strong content knowledge who will work with other teachers to integrate STEM disciplines and increase achievement and interest in STEM subjects at an early age. This is important to maintaining and developing a strong pipeline in the STEM fields."

Museum of Science, Boston and the National Center for Technological Literacy: President and Director Ioannis Miaoulis

"Your efforts to promote excellence in STEM education are to be highly commended. Recognizing that a 21st century curriculum must include today's engineered world, the NCTL strives to introduce engineering in K-12 schools and science museums across the nation. We stand ready to assist in advancing this STEM education legislation."

Silicon Valley Education Foundation: CEO Muhammed Chaudhry

"If California is serious about restoring our schools to the nation's top ranks and investing in the workforce of the future, a dynamic STEM education strategy needs to be a key part of the

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equation. We need more students prepared to tackle the technological and business challenges that lie ahead if our nation is to remain a leader in scientific advancement and global innovation. SVEF partners with some of Silicon Valley's largest technology companies to fund these programs. At the Silicon Valley Education Foundation, we prepare students for college and STEM careers of the future with rigorous summer math & science acceleration programs, Stepping Up to Algebra and Stepping Up to Science."

California STEM Learning Network: Mr. Chris Roe, CEO

"CSLNet is pleased to support Congressman Honda's STEM bills that will jumpstart innovative work being undertaken in California and nearly every state to advance STEM education. With the implementation of common core standards in math and now science, it is more critical than ever that states work together with partners from business and industry and with federal agencies to leverage scarce resources and ensure coordination and scaling of best practices, which this legislation will enable."